

NORTH DAKOTA VETERANS COORDINATING COUNCIL

Minutes of the November 19, 1990 Meeting

The North Dakota Veterans Coordinating Council met Monday, November 19, 1990 at the AMVETS Club in Bismarck. The meeting was called to order at 1:08 pm by Council President Kenneth M. Evenson. The Pledge of Allegiant was recited and a moment of silence was rendered for our POW/MIAs.

No one was present from OMB to address the Council.

Roll Call

American Legion

Curtis Twete, Cmdr.
Vern Useldinger, Adj.
Earl Redlin, Rep.

Disabled American Veterans

Julius Wedman, Cmdr.
Orlando "Duke" Ellingson
for Robert Hannah, Adj.
Victor Hass for
Lloyd D. Halvorson, Rep.

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Bernard Beach, Cmdr.
Raymond Stelmachuk, Adj/QM
Richard Grenz for
Jerome Bixby, Rep.

AMVETS

Kenneth M. Evenson, Cmdr.
Elmer M. Ekern, Adj.
Vigo J. Pedersen, Rep.

Honorary Counsel and Resource Members

VVA Pres. Larry Senger, ACOVA Chair Bernie Wagner, Commissioner Milt Kane, Commandant Frank Gathman, VETS Director Leo Swenson, Jerry Ahlering representing DVA Center Director Donald Colston, PIO Dave Schmidt, and NDCVSO President John Meyer. Nancy Hildebrant represented AMVETS Auxiliary President Dotty Evenson. The other Auxiliary Presidents were absent.

Legislative Committee

Leo Swenson, Joseph T. Smith, Jr., Orlando "Duke" Ellingson, Richard D. Ryan, and Joseph J. OBrien. Gayle Syverson was absent.

Guests

Jim Coats, Dennis Berg, Chuck Godke, Al Georgeson, Dennis Moch, Joe Novak, Bob Hanson, Ron Otto

Motion by Earl Redlin to dispense with the minutes, second by Ray Stelmachuk. Larry Senger objected. Stelmachuk stated he could not object since he was no longer a voting member. Senger said he was. Ekern read the minutes where VVA had been removed for not verifying membership at the July meeting. Senger said he was not notified to report membership. Ellingson said they also had not paid their dues. Senger questioned when they were due and why he had not been billed. Ekern read from previous minutes where they were not represented in July, had one representative in March, had no representative in October but Milt Kane and Leo Swenson were named to represent them. Evenson ruled VVA was on probation and could come back in next July as voting members if they pay their dues, show 750 members, and hold a convention. Senger asked what

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mobile clinic may become a reality with the clinic based out of Bismarck. They are seeking three to five more doctors, nurse recruiting is fair, but they are losing pharmacists and could be down four. Closed ward may be converted to long term care so 78 beds at Fargo may be reassigned in the closed wards. They have a floccitometer and are negotiating with NDSU to share its use. Labor problems seem to be resolving. He was asked about a new regional office building. We should have a building and moved in by late FY92.

John Meyer, president of the county service officers introduced the service officers present. He reported that 46 were present at their conference in Fargo. They will meet in Bismarck in March. They are interested in veterans preference and are updating their by-laws.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Veterans' Preference committee would report under new business. There were no other committee reports.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

VFW Commander Bernie Beach named Aldon Georgeson and Walter Dockter as their Legislative Committee members.

Pres. Evenson asked about legal council. Kane stated that Chuck Gilje of Jamestown had been serving, charging on a case-by-case business, and was still interested in veterans concerns. Motion by Julius Wedman to retain Chuck Gilje as legal council, second by Bernie Beach, carried.

Evenson stated no names were received for Legislative Liaison Director. Joe Novak's name was mentioned. Ray Stelmachuk questioned why a director was needed. Novak was asked his interest but said it didn't appear the Council was ready. Evenson stated the position had been approved and was a part of the by-laws. Novak gave his views on the position and conceded to accepting the position rather than see it go unattended, but would like to see a young, aggressive person in the position. He asked for a listing of the Legislative Committee members which the secretary read to him. He also said he would be gone some in January and February but would serve on an interim basis and asked the Council to continue searching for a younger person. Milt Kane said he had a part time office person in Bismarck who could help in Novak's absence. Novak read some of the requirements in the job description to point out the need of someone to be on top of legislation at all times. Motion by Julius Wedman to accept Joe Novak's offer to serve as the Legislative Liaison Director, second by Vern Useldinger, carried.

President Evenson called Chairman Curt Twete to the podium to present the Veterans' Preference committee recommendations. They were to make changes in 37-19.1-04 where the committee would continue to rewrite and clarify the issue on appeals hearings when

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sending them to the legislative liaison. Novak said send them to someone who would be here. Evenson decided they should all be sent to the chairman of the Legislative committee by January 10th.

Twete asked if the Flag resolution would be legislature legislation or pre-filed legislation or just what way should it be pursued? Useldinger knew some legislators who would sponsor it. He said whether it was pre-filed or introduced it should have bipartisan sponsorship. Novak was not so sure it could be pre-filed. He suggested getting it sponsored with as many bipartisan names as possible.

M/G Macdonald, Adjutant General, appeared before the Council to make his presentation concerning the state veterans' cemetery. To go into the national cemetery program for matching funds would mean having to raise \$500,000 and then applying for federal dollars. They were also concerned about environmental requirements at the federal level which would be more severe than state regulations. Thirdly, no National Guard members who were not veterans could be buried in the cemetery except in a separate section away from the national portion.

The alternate was to get a \$100,000 grant from the Guard at the national level for materials and to use the Guard for construction and archaeological work. They are planning to apply for another Guard grant. Also, they are trying to raise funds through gaming, etc. They have raised \$30,000 to date. If they wait to go into the national system they would have to stop work now and wait about two years. The federal dollars would be for construction only.

The cemetery people would like to raise money for a trust fund for perpetual care, using the interest off the trust fund. Dedication is planned for 1992, the 50th anniversary of the landing of the 164th at Guadalcanal. With a million dollar trust fund Macdonald feels they could maintain the cemetery and provide some benefits for burial.

Ron Otto had several question to ask about the cemetery such as the use of national cemetery funding, that the Davis-Bacon law would not affect the construction, and that not all the \$500,000 would have had to be raised if an estimated, proven cost could be made. He felt a decent marriage could be made between the Guard and the federal government to build the cemetery. Evenson brought the discussion to a close.

Milt Kane spoke in favor of supporting the cemetery, but that trust fund monies were not yet available. Motion by Vigo Pedersen to take the request for funding support back to each organization and local posts until such time that funds have accumulated to establish perpetual care. Second by Wedman, carried.

Motion by Earl Redlin to compensate the secretary/treasurer \$75.00 per meeting for work involved with the Council. Second by Stelmachuk. Ekern said we should first look at financing the legislative liaison director position. Stelmachuk said the secretary/treasurer duties should be compensated first. Motion carried.

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